DHARMAKIRTI ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN
SVARTHANUMANA AND PARARTHANUMANA

In this paper, we intend to point out that *Svārthānumāna* and *Parārthānumāna* are not two different species of *Anumāna*, as it seems to be claimed by *Naiyāyikas*. Rather, the claim of the Buddhists that it is an aspectival distinction of *Anumāna* seems to be more respectable. The Buddhists seem, further, to be right in holding a view that *Svārthānumāna* alone could be considered to be epistemic condition of *Anumāna*.

Although number of interesting problems arise with reference to the distinction between *Svārthānumāna* and *Parārthānumāna*, I wish to deal only with three of them in what follows :

In the first section, we deal with the question of the need and necessity of making the distinction under consideration. The second section discusses briefly the manner in which the distinction should be made. while the last section hopes to give a clue to understand the implications of the distinction. An exercise of this kind, we hope, would enable us to interpret and understand the distinction between *Svārthānumāna* and *Parārthānumāna* appropriately.

Section I : A Need to Distinguish :

Very often one is misled by the view that *Svārthānumāna —* *Parārthānumāna* classification of *Anumāna* is based on the genuinely distinct kinds of it. For, it is argued that, prima facie, *Svārthānumāna* means inference for oneself, whereas *Parār-*

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thānumāna means inference for others. [1] In other words, here *Anumāna* is sought to be classified depending upon the person for whose convenience it is employed. However, there seems to be another aspect also connected with the classification under consideration. It is held that when some inference is put before me by someone else, the cognition or comprehension I get through it is qualitatively different from the one I get on the basis of my own inference. The difference between the two cognitions arises because in one case I am myself involved in the process of inferring, whereas in the other the inferential process is carried out by someone else and a full–fledged argument is put before me which enables me to comprehend. [2] Thus, the distinction between *Svārthānumāna* and *Parārthānumāna* seems to be embeded in the distinction between two kinds of cognitions – direct and indirect – held to be made available inferentially, and this seems to be something analogous to a claim with regard to *Pratyakṣa* through which perceptual cognition becomes available either via *Sannikarṣa* or *Pratyāsatti* (i. e. according as whether the perception involved is *Laukika* or *Alaukika*). [3]

Secondly, the difference between *Svārthānumāna* and *Parārthanumāna* is sought to be explained differently saying whereas the latter is expressed in language, the former is not. That is, whereas in the former, cognition is without communication, in the latter, it is mediated with linguistic modes of communication, although in both communicability of the cognition under consideration should not be sacrificed or ruled out. In that case, while in *Svārthānumāna* the cognition, although communicable would be uncommunicated, in *Parārthānumāna* it would be communicated. [4] Further, holding *Parārthānumāna* to be primary and emphasising communicative aspect of it, it is held that *Svārthānumāna* is an abstraction from *Parārthanumāna*, [5] and

hence is secondary to it. Emphasising the communicative aspect of *Auumāna Naiyāyikas* seem to put forth another basis of distinguishing between the two.

Before we start critically evaluating these claims it is essential to point out that on the Buddhist side the distinction between *Svārthānumāna* and *Parārthānumāna* is made quite clearly by Dharmakirti, perhaps, for the first time. Though Diṅnāga in his *pramāṇa–samuccaya* seems to have pioneered the distinction and has devoted two separate chapters to their treatment, yet on deeper analysis one can find that the difference between *Svārthānumāna* and *Parārthānumāna* was not perhaps sufficiently clear to him. For, by *Svārthānumāna* he means an *Anumāna* without *Vyāpti*, while *Parārthānumāna* is the one with *Vyāpti*. However, one finds it extremely hard to understand how *Anumāna* could be classified into those which have and which do not have *vyāpti*. This classification of *Anumāna* seems to be as unacceptable as Aristotle's classification of living beings into those which have and which do not have blood in their body is unacceptable. The moral to be learnt is that mere dichotomousness of classification does not in itself make it acceptable. Further, what precisely is supposed to be the *Vyāpti*? Is it an *Avayava* of *Anumāna*, something substitutable for *Pakṣadharmāta* or an independent regulative principle of *Anumāna*? In addition, what sort of *Anumāna* would it be if it lacks *Vyāpti*? Both *Vyāpti* and *Pakṣadharmatā* are acknowledged to be determiners of inferential cognition, and hence one being replaced by another is out of question. The moment one begins to consider such questions seriously, it is noticed that Diṅnāga's treatment of *Anumāna* does not seem to be backed by appropriate methodological perspective. Dharmakirti, on the other hand, appears to be more clear with regard to such questions. Engagement with nuances of Diṅnāga – Dharmakirti controversy and its

consequences not being our present concern, leaving it aside, we
briefly state Dharmakirti's views regarding *Anumāna*.

Further, it needs to be kept in mind that *Svārthānumāna —
Parārthānumāna* classification of *Anumāna* seems to have been
adopted by *Naiyāyikas* at a very late chronological stage of
their thought. Leaving that aside for the moment, while under-
standing these two terms, people generally confuse between their
meanings and interpretations given to them by adherents of
different schools of philosophical thought, and ignoring dif-
ferences between them they seem to argue that what they mean
is the same.[6] This sort of attitude seems to make confusion
further worse confounded.

Given the two — above mentioned contentions of *Naiyāyikas*,
they need perhaps to be looked into little more critically. In so
doing, we may be in a position to unearth some confusion
Naiyāyikas perhaps were labouring under. They seem to have
not paid enough attention to the distinction between conditions
which need to be satisfied if *Anumāna* is to stand at all, and
those which need to be fulfilled for its being communicated.
Further, if *Anumāna* is to be understood as a different mode of
cognition than that of perception, then the differential sorts of
epistemic conditions which need to be satisfied would have also
to be carefully looked into. Instead of this, excessive, if not
exclusive, concentration upon communicative aspect of *Anumāna*
is likely to distract us from our principal epistemic concern.

According to Dharmakirti, on the other hand, it is essential
to tackle issues and problems connected with *Anumāna* in the
framework of *Auumāna* alone. For their treatment and resolution,
according to him, appropriate methodological considerations
cannot be ignored to be looked into. He seems to be right in
holding that while dealing with certain problems, it is necessary

to pay attention to the context in which they arise, so that we do not treat them wrongly. On this background, as we shall see later, it should not be difficult to understand the way he distinguishes between. *Svārthānumāna* and *Parārthānumāna*. Prior to it, however, let us critically evaluate the two contentions, mentioned earlier, of *Naiyāyikas*. In this we shall take up the second contention first.

Even Dharmakīrti should have no compunction to accept that while *Parārthānumāna* is verbalised, *Svārthānumāna* is not verbalised.[7] However, merely on this ground he would not accept classification of *Anumāna* based on this. For, both are equally important epistemologically, and they give rise to the same kind of cognition. The inferential cognition, thus, they give rise to being the same, it becomes redundant to consider whether it is verbalised or not. The general nature and form of the cognition under consideration being the same it is purposeless to classify it.[8] Rather, a classification of *Anumāna* upon such a basis would, according to him, be more confusing. Moreover, it does not seem to be backed by any appropriate methodological perspective, as it is seen to be revolving merely around verbalization or non-verbalization issue. Hence, to claim that *Anumāna* has two aspects, non-verbalised and verbalised, is one thing, while to hold that they are two distinct kinds of *Anumāna* is quite another. Two aspects of *Anumānn* could not be said to be presenting two distinct kinds of it. Thus, aspectival view of *Anumāna* would not supply its classificatory foundation.

If not on the basis of verbalised – non-verbalised consideration, yet, it may be argued that *Anumāna* could perhaps be classified properly depending either upon the person for whom it is meant [9] or else upon the differential kinds of cognitions it is alleged to give rise to. On the former count it could perhaps be held that when I derive cognition from my own inference it is

direct, while the one I derive from an inference communicated
to me by someone else is indirect. But according to Dharmakīrti
this is erroneous. For, cognition derived from *Anumāna* is
always *Parokṣa* (indirect) and never *Aparokṣa* (direct).[10]
Hence to claim that *Svārthānumāna–Parārthānumāna* distinc-
tion is based on two distinct kinds of cognitions involved
must be held to be untenable according to him. There is no
way to classify inferential cognition into direct and indirect and
accordingly cannot be made basis of any viable classification of
Anumāna. Additionally, such a move has in it two further in-
herent consequences : one, it will lead to *Pramāṇa–Saṁplava*
which is unacceptable to Buddhists. And two, it would force us
to give up consideration of simplicity, not to talk of our embrac-
ing a philosophically pseudo classification. Likewise, it seems
equally erroneous to classify *Anumāna* depending upon for whom
it is employed. For, the only difference that happens to be made
is that if I employ *Anumāna* for myself it remains unverbalised,
while if I communicate it to someone else it has to be verbalised.
But this neither gives rise to differential cognition nor does it
supply any methodologically viable basis for classification of
Anumāna. [11]

Thus, the distinction between *Sv ārtlāɪ ɪn ɪ a* and *Parārthā·
numāna,* whichever way it is understood, according to Dharma-
kīrti, does not supply any viable basis of classification of *Anumāna*
though it does bring forth two aspects of *Anumāna*. *Anumāna,*
whether *Svātḥānumāna* or *Parṇrthānumāna,* would raise the
same kind of cognitive or certificatory issues, as the principal
kind of cognition involved would be the same.

Instead of making aspects of *Anumāna* the basis of its classi-
fication, as *Naiyāyikas* seem to do, Dharmakīrti rightly seems
to look for classification of *Anumāna* elsewhere. Thus, for him
Anumāna is not simple and hence unclassifiable. But at the

same time it is not aspectivally classifiable, as *Naiyāyikas* seem
to think. For appropriate classification of *Anumāna,* according
to Dharmakīrti, one has to look to the differential kinds of
forms of it rather than to different aspects of it. His classifica-
tion of *Anumāna* into *Svabhāvānumāna, Kāryānumāno* and
Anupalabdhyanumāna seems to be classification of it in the
proper sense of the term.[12] It is beyond the scope of this paper
to probe further into it.

Granted that *Svārthānumāna-Parārthānumāna* distinction
of *Auumāua* is classificatorily sterile, has this distinction no pur-
pose to serve ? As we shall point out below it brings forth an
aspectival distinction concerning *Anumāna* which has important
implications, although none of them can be basis of any metho-
dologically viable classification of *Anumāna.*

Section II – The Distinction Itself :

Anumāna as a distinct mode of cognition, as compared with
perception, has a significant epistemological role to play.
Though the kind of cognition it leads to, generally, is the same,
the aspects of *Anumāna* are not the same. Further, a certain
kind of epistemic priority could be discerned with reference to
aspects of *Anumāna* and if it is not properly understood then
our understanding of it is more likely to be philosophically
misleading. The distinction between *Svārthānumāna* and *Parā-
rthānumāna* needs to be understood aspectivally, according to
Dharmakīrti, from this point of view. Earlier we saw that while
the former of them does not involve communication, the latter
does. Now, since the kind of cognition they make available is
essentially the same, communicative garb of it in *Parārthānu-
māna* could not be said to be determinative of the cognitive
role of *Svārthānumāna.* In fact, what is comprehended indepen-
dently of actual communication, although indirectly, could be

sought to be communicated. Hence, epistemological considerations
being primarily important, *Svārthānumāna* alone becomes pri-
mary. It could be said to be the epistemic condition of *Anumāna*.
In addition, constitutive conditions of *Anumāna* like *Pakṣa*.
Sādhya and *Hetu*, or regulative conditions of *Anumāna* like
Vyāpti and *Pakṣadharmatā* would have to be fulfilled if it is to
stand at all, although bare fulfilment of the latter would not
lead to any cognition.[13] The distinction between *Svārthānumāna*
and *Parārthānumāna* could perhaps be clarified saying that
while the former is *Anumāna* fashioned and formulated, the latter
is *Anumāna* that is articulated. That is, in the former *Anumāna*
is entertained, on the ground of the fulfilment of the legitimate
conditions of its entertainment, while in the latter it (i.e., an
already entertained argument) is presented in a linguistic garb.[14]
The distinction between *Svārthānumāna* and *Parārthānumāna*
thus understood, may perhaps be clarified along an analogy of a
healthy young child in a natural condition on the one hand and
the same child dressed up on the other.

Even if the role of *Anumāna* is sought to be understood not
merely cognitively but with a view to certifying knowledge-
claim on its basis, then too primordiality of *Svārthānumāna*
over *Parārthānumāna* does not vanish. For, it is not mere
linguistic garb that makes inferential cognition certificatorily
viable, but rather its being well-founded, and its being so
well-founded must be satisfied on the level of *Svārthānumāna*
itself. Thus, even certification would necessarily presuppose
cognition and without cognition certificatory effort would be
blind. Further, while cognition without justification is possible,
justification without cognition is not feasible, and in the case
of *Anumāna* or inferential cognition too these two aspects need
to be distinguished, which in turn seem to focus on primordiality
of *Svārthānumāna*.

Secondly, epistemic aspect is predominant in *Svārthānumāna* while communicative aspect in *Parārthānumāna*. Without language we cannot communicate, although without it we can cognise. But what we communicate needs to be cognised first *Svārthānumāna* gets priority in order of knowing as compared to *Parārthānumāna*. For communicability is a pre–condition of communication and not of cognition. Likewise, cognition does not seem to require satisfaction of the condition of communication as a precondition of it, although what we cognise can never be communicated unless it is communicable.

Thirdly while for *Svārthānumāna* a single individual is, enough, there is no question of resorting to *Parārthānumāna* unless there are at least two persons. Thus, while for *Parārthānumāna* communicative or dialoguical situation is a pre–condition· for *Svārthāuumāna*, *Anumāna* being epistemically able to stand at all is the requisite pre–condition that is required to be satisfied and not its being communicated. The dialoguical and non–dialoguical contexts symbolised by *Parārthānumāna* and *Svārthānumāna* respectively bring forth different aspects of *Anumāna*, though not different kinds of it. This shows that entertainment of *Anumāna* in a non–dialoguical context is perfectly legitimate and hence dialoguical context cannot, as understood by *Naiyāyikas*, be held to be pre–condition of both communication and entertainment of *Anumāna*. *Naiyāyikas* seem to model conditions of entertainment of *Anumāna* upon those of its communication, and they being different, the two aspects of *Anumāna* which prompt it need to be distinguished. Hence, inference need not necessarily imply fulfilment of the condition of dialoguical and debating situation, and so to hold *Parārthanuman* to be primary seems to be a move that is methodogically difficult to sustain.

Incidentally, it is interesting and worthwhile to note that *Svārthānumāna – Parārthānumāna* distinction of *Anumāna* is

parallel to the *Nirvikalpa – Savikalpa* distinction of *Pratyaṣa*. Considered from the point of view of the minimum conditions which are required to be fulfilled, *Svārthānumāna* in case of *Anumāna* and *Nirvikalpa Pratyakṣa* in case of *Pratyakṣa* seem to be epistemologically primary in their respective domains in a similar way.

It is important to look into the implications of this distinction for that would enable us to understand its philosophical worth. It is to the consideration of it that we turn.

Section III : Implications

Without bringing to the light, the pros and cons of the distinction under consideration, the significance of it cannot be judged and acknowledged. Granting that the distinction is backed by methodological and epistemic considerations, its important implications need to be brought to the foreground. Though there are number of implications of it, we will concentrate on some important of them by way of a sample. For, to understand the importance of anything, it is not necessary to focus on each and every point, and it would be enough even if some important of them are considered.

To start with, this distinction enables us to understand and acknowledge the epistemic and methodological considerations involved in the process of inferential cognition. Independently of it we are likely to confuse between these two aspects of *Anumāna*.

Secondly, it teaches us that aspectival distinction need not necessarily supply us a warrantable classificatory clue, and that for legitimate classificatian of *Anumāna* we may have to look elsewhere. This insight of Dharmakịrti is important both epistemologically as well as methodologically.

Thirdly, it teaches us that to bring in the distinction between direct and indirect cognition within the fold of *Anumāna* destroys the very basis of the distinction between perceptual and inferential cognition. The retention of aspectival distinction between them, at the same time, saves us from falling a prey to the doctrine of *Pramāṇa-Saṁplava*, a weak point with *Nyāya* philosophers.

Fourthly, it teaches us that although inferential cognition would have to satisfy the condition of communicability, communicability in itself does not demand fulfilment of the condition of dialogical situation for an argument being entertained at all.

Lastly, it seems to invite us to make two important distinctions with reference to *Anumāna* — (a) its epistemic conditions and (b) its constitutive and regulative conditions, and that it seems to seek us to guard ourselves from a temptation to confuse between them.[15]

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NOTES

1. Anumānam dvividham, svārtham-parārtham ca / *Tarka-saṁaraha;* Annambhatta; Athalye and Bodas (ed.) Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute: Poona, 1974, Section 45, p. 37 (See also *Tarka-dipikā* and *Nyāya-bodhini* on it.)
   See also,
   Pakṣadharamatā pratipādanena tasyopayogah parārthānumāne / Svārthānumāne tu... saṁbandheti / Udayanācārya, *N. V. T. T. Pariśuddhi*, I. i. 5.

2. Yathā parasamavatānumitikaranam ... yasmād iti vyutpattirdrṣtavyā/ *Nyāya-kosa*, p. 477, or, Anumānam dvividham / Svārtham parārtham/ Svasyaivārthah prayojanam (anumitih) yasmāttat svārtham parasya .. yasmāttat parārtham / *Nyāya-Kosa;* Jhalakikar B. (ed.), Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1978, p. 30.
   See also,
   Athamā bhūvan parapratipādakāh, svapratipādaka...svārthān pratipādayantah / Vācaspati Misra, *Nyāya-Vārtika - Tātparya-Tikā*, I. i. 32

3. Svārthānumitim darśayati I ... sannikarṣātkatham vyāptigrahah ......
tatparāthānumānamiti tatcchabdenānvayah / *Tarka-dipikā* on *Tarka-saṁgraha*, p. 38
See also,

Tad dvividham...yogipratyakṣam, a-yogipratyakṣam ceti / Bhāsarvajña'
Nyāya-Sāra and *Nyāya-Bhūṣaṇa* on it – Tadevam pratyakṣasya.....
sthūlārthagrāhakamiti / pp. 100-104.

4. Tathāhi svayameva bhūyo darśanena...pancāvayavavākyam prayunkte
tatparārthānumānam...pratipadyate / *Tarka-saṁgraha*, p. 37
See also,

Tat punardvividham – svārtham parārtham ceti / ..... paropadeśastu
pancāvayavavākyam / Bhāsarvajna, *Nyāya-Sāra* and *Nyāya*-Bhūṣaṇa
on it :
Anye tu bruvate...parārthānumānam bhavatiti / pp. 272-273.

5. Tatra   paropadesānapekṣam...parārthānumanam   bhavatiti / *Nyāya-bhūṣaṇa;* Bhāsarvajna, yogindrānanda Swami (ed.) Sad-darśana-prakāsana – pratiṣṭhāna, Varanasi, 1968, p. 273.

6. *History of Indian Logic,* Vidyabhūṣana, Satischandra, p. 359,   or
Buddhist Logic, Th. Stcherbatsky, Vol. I, p. 293.

7. Athānumanalakṣaṇe vaktavye...lakṣanamasti / *Nyāya-bindu-tika;*
Dharmottara; Shastri, C. S. (ed.); Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series
Banaras, 1954, Ch. II, p. 21.

8. Tallinge ca vipratipattayah.....vyāpto heturboddhavyah / *Pramāna-vārtika,* Dharmakirti, Swami, Dwarikadas Shastri (ed.). Bauddha
Bharati Series, Varanasi, 1968, p. 257 (See also Manorathanandi's
vrtti on it).

9. Tatastayoh...prākprakārabhedah kathyata iti / *Nyāva-bindu-tikā,* p. 21.

10. Tatra svārtham...tadanumānam / *Nyāya-bindu,* Dharmakirti, Shastri,
D. S. (ed.) (with *Nyāya-bindu-tikā*) p. 21.

11. Tatra tayoh svārthaparārthānumānayormadhye...tat svārthānumāna-
miti / *Nyāya-bindu-tikā,* p. 21.

12. Tat trirūpatvam, tridhaivasah / *Pramāna-vārtika* with Manoratha-
nandi's *vrtti,* p. 257.

13. Anumānasya dve ange / Vyāpti-pakṣadharmatāsca iti / *Hetu-bindu,*
Dharmakirti; Malavaniya, Dalsukhbhai (ed.) Gaekwad Oriental
Series, Baroda, 1948, pp. 1-2. (See also *tikā* and *Aloka* on it).

14. Trirūpalingākhyānamiti.....iti paramārthah / *Nyāya-bindu-tikā,*
Ch. III, p. 46.

and

Trirūpalingākhyānam .... prāguktam / *Nyāya-bindu,* Ch. III, p. 67.
(See also *tikā* on it.)

15. I am grateful to Dr. M. P. Marathe for his important suggestions.